

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Legislative Committee

LOCATION

**Governor's Council Conference Room
3601 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska
Teleconference**

Meeting Date

**February 12, 2015
12:00 p.m.**

Attendees:

Art Delaune
Alex Gimarc
Banarsi Lal
Heidi Haas
Christine King
Steve Lesko
Anthony Cravalho
Terese Kashi
Karli Lopez
Grace Abbott for Rep. Millett
Malory Hamilton
Ric Nelson

Guests:

Su Isakson

Staff:

Patrick Reinhart
Kristin Vandagriff
Brittney Howell
Johanna Richter

Prepared by: Paula DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 12:00 p.m.
ROLL CALL

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Dean Gates was unable to attend the meeting, and Ric Nelson chaired in his place.

Announcements and Good News

There were no announcements or good news to report.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Additions were made to the agenda under new business. Karli Lopez **MOVED** to approve the meeting agenda as amended. The motion **PASSED**.

APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Banarsi Lal **MOVED** to approve the minutes from the 1/14/15 Legislative Committee meeting as presented. The motion **PASSED**.

CORRESPONDENCE

Patrick Reinhart reported that there was an alert that went out today regarding the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization. The Education Committee of the Council has been reviewing and commenting on a variety of drafts of this legislation.

REPORTS

Report from the Chair

Ric Nelson had nothing to report at this time.

Report from Staff

Patrick Reinhart reported that staff have been hard at work keeping track of things going on in the legislature and have been adding additional legislative items to their list to track. They have also been preparing for Key Campaign.

Patrick commented that things get fast and furious during the legislative session, and if staff ask for the opinions of Council or committee members relative to legislative issues, it's important to reply so staff has feedback to act in the best interest of the Council.

OLD BUSINESS

January Council Meeting Debrief

Patrick Reinhart asked for committee feedback on the January Council meeting. Mallory Hamilton stated that she liked using REACH's office away from the Hill to debrief. She noted that it would have been helpful to have the legislators' biographies printed out for review prior to their meetings.

Mallory Hamilton also asked why the Council chose to be in Juneau the first day of the legislative session. She noted that it was sort of crazy with the legislators still moving in. Patrick Reinhart noted that the Council usually does it this way so as not to conflict or overlap with other organizations meeting there at the same time. He stated that the Executive Committee is in the process of considering whether or not to change the dates to potentially the second week of the session and possibly overlapping with the Trust for a day.

Denali Deaf Community Center (DDCC)

Su Isakson thanked the Council and the Legislative Committee for all the work they put in to their legislative visits. She noted that the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) was in Juneau following the Council, and they too advocated on behalf of the DDCC.

Su stated that they are reconvening based on the feedback provided from the Council and the SILC regarding their legislative visits, and they are

working to be able to present more information to the legislators regarding the DDCC.

Mallory Hamilton asked Su Isakson whether or not the DDCC had considered a bond issue in Anchorage or other types of alternative funding. Su Isakson stated that she would be happy to explore a bond issue if someone can put her in touch with a contact person.

Disability Training and ID Bill – HB 77

Art Delaune stated that HB 77, sponsored by Representative Thompson, has had Representatives Gara, Kawasaki, Kito, Saddler, and Vazquez sign on as co-sponsors.

Art stated that he heard from the SILC that there was no push back from legislators regarding this bill. Representative Thompson's office is making sure there is no large fiscal note attached to this bill that may stall it. Art also mentioned that they are working with Senator Coghill to sponsor the bill on the Senate side. The Fairbanks support group is currently trying to gather letters of support and personal stories. Christine King suggested gathering letters of support or stories from the police department personnel as well. Art Delaune stated that they are in the process of doing that.

Anthony Cravalho stated that Senator Olson seems to be very supportive of this bill.

Medicaid

Britteny Howell stated that included in the Legislative Committee packet is a short summary of all the different Medicaid options called the Medicaid Waiver 1915 Home and Community-Based Service Options. The back side of the sheet contains information about various other states that are using those options if legislators would like to do further research on the topic. She asked that committee members review the document and provide her feedback on it. Kristin Vandagriff stated that they are going to include this document and any other position papers the Council develops in with the thank-you cards they will send to the legislators.

Key Campaign

Kristin Vandagriff stated that she and Britteny have been working to set all of the 60 legislative visits for Key Campaign. They also have the PowerPoint ready to give people a little more information on the three priorities, the rally has been set, and the Unity Dinner has been arranged.

Steve Lesko stated that he believes the platform is very solid and is centered around the waivers. He stated that they are coupling with the Council on some cost-saving mechanisms, and they are encouraging a long-term fiscal plan that looks at constitutional mandates, as well as looking at prioritization as well as arbitrary, across-the-board cuts. They are also supporting things like the autism report from the task force on autism. Steve commented that they have over 20 plus legislators who have RSVP'ed to the Unity Dinner.

NEW BUSINESS

HB 76 – Removal of “gifted” from GCDSE enabling statute – sponsored by Representative Millett

Grace Abbott reported that they recently received a report back from legislative research, and she believes this will not be too difficult a bill to explain why “gifted” can be seamlessly removed from the statutes. She stated that they are looking at compiling a full hearing request to present to the chair of the House Health and Social Services Committee, and hopefully they will get a hearing soon. She will keep the Council up to date on the process so they can be sure to have Council members available to provide testimony or support.

HB 77 – Disability Training and ID Bill

Previously discussed.

Budget

Patrick Reinhart stated that the Governor released his budget at the beginning of February, and staff have been going through the budget to

determine any impacts related to the Council and its constituents. The following impacts have so far been determined:

- Complex Behavior Collaborative funding has been cut - \$525,000
- Reduction to the developmental disability grants - 3.3 percent
- Reductions to the Council's travel and services budget.

Patrick Reinhart stated that there are also a variety of shifts in the budget document related to Medicaid expansion. He stated that it will be the Council's job to advocate for and create position papers to show the effects and unintended consequences of cutting direct services.

Christine King added that an investigator position with Adult Protective Services has also been cut. Patrick asked that Christine forward that information to him.

Alaska ABLE Act

Karli Lopez stated that she has been informed that Representative Saddler will be introducing an Alaska ABLE Act bill, and it is something the Council should keep an eye on. Patrick Reinhart asked Grace Abbott to check with Representative Millett to see if this is something she might co-sponsor. Karli Lopez will forward any other information she receives to the Council.

HB 99 – Dying with Dignity Act

Alex Gimarc stated that HB 99 has been introduced by Representative Drummond and essentially is physician-assisted suicide legislation. Patrick Reinhart commented that this type of legislation has created a lot of national dialogue and a lot of opposition, particularly with regards to people with significant disabilities choosing to end their lives.

Committee members engaged in further discussion regarding the philosophy behind such legislation, and Patrick Reinhart concluded that the Council will need to do further research into this legislation to determine the intent.

HB 89 – Civics examination and secondary school graduation requirements

Kristin Vandagriff stated that this legislation relates to students being required to take a basics civics examination, similar to a citizenship test, that must be passed in order to graduate. She noted that there is a waiver for students with disabilities, but staff will need to investigate further to determine what that waiver entails. She noted that the legislation was introduced on January 30th, and no co-sponsors have joined as of yet. They will continue to track the legislation to ensure it will not negatively impact individuals with disabilities.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

- AADD Meeting – February 18, Juneau
- Key Campaign – February 19 – 20, Juneau
- Stone Soup Group Parent Conference – March 6 – 7.

TIME AND DATE OF NEXT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Legislative Committee meeting is scheduled for March 12th from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Heidi Haas **MOVED** to adjourn. The motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.